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A CERTAIN woman, after prolonged labour, gave birth to twins, both sons. And each one, as he was brought forth, came into this world with a valuable fetish, or charm. One the mother called Luemba, the other Mavungu. And they were almost full-grown at their birth, so that Mavungu, the first-born, wished to start upon his travels.

Now about this time the daughter of Nzambi was ready for marriage. The tiger came and offered himself in marriage; but Nzambi told him that he must speak to her daughter himself, as she should only marry the man of her choice. Then the tiger went to the girl and asked her to marry him, but she refused him. And the gazelle, and the pig, and all created things that had breath, one after the other, asked the daughter in marriage; but she refused them all, saying that she did not love them; and they were all very sad.

Mavungu heard of this girl, and determined to marry her. And so he called upon his charm, and asked him to help him; and then he took some grass in his hands, and changed one blade of grass into a horn, another into a knife, another into a gun, and so on, until he was quite ready for the long journey.

Then he set out, and travelled and travelled, until at last hunger overcame him, when he asked his charm whether it was true that he was going to be allowed to starve. The charm hastened to place a sumptuous feast before him, and Mavuligu ate and was satisfied.

"Oh, charm!" Mavungu said, "are you going to leave these beautiful plates which I have used for the use of any commoner that may come along?" The charm immediately caused all to disappear.

Then Mavungu travelled and travelled, until at length he became very tired, and had to ask his charm to arrange a place for him where he might sleep. And the charm saw to his comfort, so that he passed a peaceful night.

And after many days' weary travelling he at length arrived at Nzambi's town. And Nzambi's daughter saw Mavungu and straightway fell in love with him, and ran to her mother and father and cried: "I have seen the man I love, and I shall die if I do not marry him."

Then Mavungu sought out Nzambi, and told her that he had come to marry her daughter.

"Go and see her first, said Nzambi, and if she will have you, you may marry her."

And when Mavungu and the daughter of Nzambi saw each other, they ran towards each other and loved one another.

And they were led to a fine shimbec, and whilst all the people in the town danced and sang for gladness, Mavungu and the daughter of Nzambi slept there. And in the morning Mavungu noticed that the whole shimbec was crowded with mirrors, but that each mirror was covered so that the glass could not be seen. And he asked the daughter of Nzambi to uncover them, so that he might see himself in them. And she took him to one and opened it, and Mavungu immediately saw the perfect likeness of his native town. And she took him to another, and he there saw another town he knew; and thus she took him to all the mirrors save one, and this one she refused to let him see.

"Why will you not let me look into that mirror?" asked Mavungu.

"Because that is the picture, of the town whence no man that wanders there returns."

"Do let me see it!" urged Mavungu.

At last the daughter of Nzambi yielded, and Mavungu looked hard at the reflected image of that terrible place.

"I must go there," he said.

"Nay, you will never return. Please don't go!" pleaded the daughter of Nzambi.

"Have no fear!" answered Mavungu. "My charm will protect me."

The daughter of Nzambi cried very much, but could not move Mavungu from his purpose. Mavungu then left his newly-married wife, and mounted his horse, and set off for the town from whence no man returns.

He travelled and travelled, until at last he came near to the town, when, meeting an old woman, he asked her for fire to light his pipe.

"Tie up your horse first, and come and fetch it."

Mavungu descended, and having tied his horse up very securely, he went to the woman for the fire; and when he had come near to her she killed him, so that he disappeared entirely.

Now Luemba wondered at the long absence of his brother Mavungu, and determined to follow him. So he took some grass, and by the aid of his fetish changed one blade into a horse, another into a knife, another into a gun, and so on, until he was fully prepared for his journey. Then he set out, and after some days' journeying arrived at Nzambi's town.

Nzambi rushed out to meet him, and, calling him Mavungu, embraced him.

"Nay," said Luemba, "my name is not Mavungu; I am his brother, Luemba."

"Nonsense!" answered Nzambi. "You are my son-in-law, Mavungu." And straightway a great feast was prepared. Nzambi's daughter danced for joy, and would not hear of his not being Mavungu. And Luemba was sorely troubled, and

did not know what to do, as he was now sure that Nzambi's daughter was Mavungu's wife. And when night came, Nzambi's daughter would sleep in Luemba's shimbec; but he appealed to his charm, and it enclosed Nzambi's daughter in a room, and lifted her out of Luemba's room for the night, bringing her back in the early morning.

And Luemba's curiosity was aroused by the many closed mirrors that hung about the walls; so he asked Nzambi's daughter to let him look into them. And she showed him all excepting one; and this she told him was the one that reflected the town whence no man returns. Luemba insisted upon looking into this one; and when he had seen the terrible picture he knew that his brother was there.

Luemba determined to leave Nzambi's town for the town whence no man returns; and so after thanking them all for his kind reception, he set out. They all wept loudly, but were consoled by the fact that he had been there once already, and returned safely, so that he could of course return a second time. And Luemba travelled and travelled, until he also came to where the old woman was standing, and asked her for fire.

She told him to tie up his horse and come to her to fetch it, but. he tied his horse up only very lightly, and then fell upon the old woman and killed her.

Then he sought out his brother's bones and the bones of his horse, and put them together, and then touched them with his charm. And Mavungu and his horse came to life again. Then together they joined the bones of hundreds of people together and touched them with their charms, so that they all lived again. And then they set off with all their followers to Nzambi's town. And Luemba told Mavungu how he had been mistaken for him by his father-in-law and wife, and how by the help of his charm he had saved his wife from dishonour; and Mavungu thanked him, and said it was well.

Then a quarrel broke out between the two brothers about the followers. Mavungu said they were his, because he was the elder; but Luemba said that they belonged to him, because he had given Mavungu and them all life.

Mavungu then fell upon Luemba and killed him; but his horse remained by his body. Mavungu then went on his way to Nzambi's town, and was magnificently welcomed.

Now Luemba's horse took his charm and touched Luemba's body, so that he lived again. Then Luemba mounted his horse, and sought out his brother Mavungu and killed him.

And when the town had heard the palaver, they all said that Luemba had done quite rightly.